



**Dr. Robert McGregor, MD
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**Proponent Testimony, Ohio Senate Bill 6 (SB 6)
Ohio House Families, Aging, and Human Services Committee
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Chairwoman Manchester, Vice-Chair Cutrona, Ranking Member Liston and the members of the House Families, Aging, and Human Services Committee, my name is Dr. Robert McGregor, and I am the Chief Medical Officer at Akron Children's Hospital, where I have served since 2013. Thank you for the opportunity to express our hospital's support and submit proponent testimony for Ohio Senate Bill 6 (SB 6).

Akron Children's Hospital is committed to ensuring that all of our providers are able to provide safe and effective health care services to the patients and families we are privileged to serve. While providing care in our communities, we know it is crucial for physicians to be able to comply with state licensure laws that cross state lines. The provision of care to patients in states where the physician is not licensed poses potential legal concerns regarding the physician's unlicensed practice in those states. Physicians are faced with a decision to either treat a patient in a state where they are not licensed or to decline providing care to that patient, often after a physician/patient relationship has been established. This raises potential ethical dilemmas between meeting the need to provide care for a patient and the need to comply with state licensure regulations, which place the physician, patient and health care organization at risk. This situation occurs frequently as a result of physicians who provide telehealth care, home health, long-distance monitoring of patients, hospital follow-up care and also due to the increased mobility of the physician workforce across state lines.

As outlined in SB 6, the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact allows physicians who wish to practice in multiple states to have one multistate license in their primary state of residence and to practice in other compact states, while being subject to each state's practice laws and discipline. Participation in the IMLC facilitates the safe, effective delivery of health care by physicians while reducing the risks of practicing in states where they are not licensed. Further, in catastrophic situations, the ability to quickly mobilize emergency staff is essential. Having expedited access to licensed, qualified and competent physicians that are guaranteed through the IMLC is imperative during these times of crisis. Currently, Ohio is nearly surrounded by states participating in the IMLC.

Amid the current coronavirus pandemic, providers are expanding access to care by increasing telehealth technology usage. Physicians are available 24 hours a day to handle telephone coverage, and without endorsement of multistate licensure, the intended use of telehealth services may be limited, which could negatively impact access to care. As one of the largest pediatric health care delivery systems in Ohio, Akron Children's Hospital has expanded to regions with limited resources in pediatric expertise, and the boundaries where we provide care continue to expand to states outside of Ohio. The Interstate Medical Licensure Compact will support the provision of physician care to all patients, regardless of the state in which they reside and allow for this to be done efficiently without requiring physicians to hold and maintain multiple licenses.

Thank you for the opportunity to share Akron Children's perspective. I respectfully request that this committee favorably report Ohio Senate Bill 6.